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By KIRK MOORE

WASHINGTON — Rep. John Adler, D-N.J., said Wednesday he is making a second attempt to get a one-time, \$250 tax credit for seniors and disabled veterans, who for the first time in 30 years are not seeing an automatic cost of living increase in Social Security benefits this year.

"We cannot continue to put our seniors in a position where they have to choose between buying their medicine, paying for their heat, or paying high property taxes," Adler wrote in a letter to the House Ways and Means Committee, asking it to take up the idea after it failed last week in the Senate. "In fact, President Obama has already made room in the fiscal year 2011 budget for a \$250 payment to seniors."

Adler forwarded petitions with signatures from 2,000 residents of his South Jersey district, which includes much of Ocean County. His bill — HR-4429, called Restoring the Social Security COLA Act — would draw on unobligated federal stimulus funds. It was co-sponsored by members of Congress from retiree-heavy districts, including Reps. Michael McMahon, D-N.Y., and John Mica and Bill Young, both R-Fla.

The cost of living adjustment is calculated using an annual economic measure called the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers. The index counts necessities such as housing, fuel, food and some medical costs, and discretionary purchases such as electronic devices. However, it "tends to understate" seniors' bigger costs for prescription medications and health care, Adler contends.